

# Sacrifice

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Summary: A desperate last stand gives humanity something to remember, and a sacrifice to honour.

Oneshot.

## Sacrifice

**\*\*Sacrifice\*\***

\_Omega Verensis System, August 24\_\_th\_\_, 2545\_

Admiral Lee looked on as his fleet was destroyed around him. Even as he watched, a squadron of light frigates was annihilated by a wave of plasma, the CCS-Class carrier that scored the kills going on to charge its ventral beam projector.

"Admiral! UNSC \_Khartoum\_ is requesting a firing solution on the carrier! â€|Admiral!"

Lee ignored the officer, the man's complaints dying out as the \_Khartoum\_ was rammed by a flight of Seraphs. Explosions blossomed along the cruiser's surface, creating a funeral pyre for the UNSC's best and brightest.

"Corvette on intercept course with the \_Kilimanjaro\_! Orders?"

Silently praying, Lee turned to the comms officer.

"Fire at will. Make those damned bastards pay."

Three tungsten rounds hurtled towards the Covenant corvette, following hot on the heels of a volley of Archer missiles. Its shields flaring on impact, the purple ship attempted to fire off countermeasures. Too late, a blue aura appeared around its hull before flashing once and disappearing. Moments later, the whole ship vanished in a pulse of energy, its reactors going critical as the MAC

rounds gutted the ship.

"Hit confirmedâ€|kill confirmed."

The bridge crew let off a small shout of triumph, only to be shocked into silence as the Kilimanjaro was engulfed in a beam of plasma and simply ceased to exist. Almost as if taunting Lee, the offending carrier slowly drifted forwards, smashing apart with contemptuous ease UNSC ships that struggled to slow it.

"Carrier on ramming course! All hands abandon ship!"

"Belay that order! All power to engines and weapons!"

The crew was silence once again after the suicidal command, only coming back to life after a moment's silence.

"Full speed ahead! Fire at the carrier!"

"â€|Fire what sir?"

"EVERYTHING, Lieutenant. Take that damned thing down!"

Lee's flagship spewed defiance against the carrier, every MAC round fired a litany of fury against the Covenant. Wave after wave of missiles impacted against the gargantuan ship's shields, doing naught but creating a firework show across its bow. As the distance closed, even anti-fighter Helix guns added to the fray, firing thumb-sized rounds by the thousands each and every second. The Zealot crew aboard the carrier no doubt questioning the sanity of the human commander, they responded with a rippling volley of plasma torpedoes and energy fire.

"Hull at seventy percentâ€|thirtyâ€|hull breached! HULL BREACHED!"

Lee gritted his teeth and called the order he dreaded the most.

"Accelerate to ramming speed! All handsâ€|abandon ship!"

His crew sprinting to the bridge doors, he himself ran towards the now-vacant gunnery station. His DNA scan verified by the firing controls, he overrode the safety protocols on the MAC guns and armed the ship's remaining Shiva nukes.

"This is Admiral Lee to all UNSC ships: disengage and retreat. This ship's about to go nuclear. May your gods be with you all. Lee out."

After that, he muttered a quick prayer to his ancestors and armed the fleet's sole NOVA-class nuclear weapon.

"This is Admiral Tiang-Shia Lee of the United Nations Space Command to all you Covenant bastards. Say your prayers to all your heathen gods, and make your peace with your ancestors. Keep this in mind: Humanity's place is among the stars, and nothing, not genocidal aliens, not even God's own anti-son-of-a-bitch machine can prevent that. Have a good afterlife."

As the last cruisers entered slipspace carrying all the recoverable escape pods, the UNSC Carrier All Under Heaven collided with the CCS carrier just as it diverted all power to its engines and overloaded the Shaw-Fujikawa drive. At the same time, a dozen MAC rounds brought down the enormous ship's shields, frying the human ship's capacitors in the process. A moment later, a new star was born within the Omega Verensis system, marking the final resting place of UNSC Admiral Tiang-Shen Lee and over 500 human ships.

There are those that say the defining battle of the Human-Covenant war was the battle of Installation 04. I disagree. For all that the Master Chief did, for all the battles he fought, not one was the turning point of humanity's struggle for existence. For while Halo was the beginning of the end, Admiral Lee's sacrifice was the end of the beginning. It showed the courage of Humanity, and was such a devastating defeat that the Covenant invasion of Reach was delayed by over a year. Over 600 Covenant ships were destroyed at Omega Verensis, at the cost of a full quarter of the UNSC fleet and the best commander humanity had since Preston J. Cole. However, this loss bought time for Halsey's research that helped discover Halo, and gave time for the UNSC's SPARTANS to enact their own Thermopylae. Though Lee's sacrifice will be remembered by few, he helped bring about humanity's future, and ensured mankind's place among the stars. And for that, he has my eternal thanks. Rest in peace old friend.

-Lord Hood, Naval Memorial, West Point, VA. Anno Domini 2552.-

End  
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